

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 139  
By Ramsey

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Ralph Blizzard for  
laudable service to the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who through their extraordinary efforts have distinguished themselves as great artists of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Ralph Blizzard, a gifted fiddler who has established himself as Tennessee's premier folk musician; and

WHEREAS, born on December 5, 1918, in Kingsport to Robert Houston Blizzard and Jennie Catherine Willis Blizzard, Ralph Blizzard grew up around music, and at only fourteen years of age, he began broadcasting on WOPI's *The Voice of the Appalachians*; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Blizzard continued to broadcast on WOPI with his band, "The Southern Ramblers," and in 1932, they debuted on WJHL on the popular Saturday morning show, *The Barrel of Fun*; and

WHEREAS, after World War II, Ralph Blizzard resumed his career, performing on Kingsport's WKPT and a highly successful show entitled *Saturday Night Hayride*; he also worked in Eastman Kodak's Tennessee facility; and

WHEREAS, in 1951, Mr. Blizzard met and married Mildred Inez Bowman, and the happy couple moved to a farm in Blountville; and

WHEREAS, just a few years later, Ralph Blizzard hung up his fiddle and focused his time and attention on his family, which now included two sons, David and Mark; and

WHEREAS, after his sons were grown, Mr. Blizzard retired from Eastman Kodak and returned to his first love, traditional music; since 1980, he has won several fiddle contests and made numerous appearances at festivals, dances, fairs and exhibitions across the United States; and

WHEREAS, Ralph Blizzard has performed his distinctive long-bow style of fiddling at the World's Fair and the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife; and

WHEREAS, throughout his illustrious career, Mr. Blizzard has been showered with accolades, as he has received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance, the American Heritage Award, the National Heritage Fellowship and the 2003 Tennessee Governor's Award in the Arts, which was awarded to him in a special presentation at the historic Ryman Auditorium; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his remarkable work in the arenas of music, family and manufacturing, Ralph Blizzard still finds time to lend his outstanding talents to worthy organizations such as the Tennessee Arts Commission; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Blizzard epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Ralph Blizzard for his dedication to the State of Tennessee and its citizens as a gifted musician; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Ralph Blizzard for his artistry as a musician and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.